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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PM-05
NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 DODE-00 IO-13 AID-05 PC-01
DOE-15 SOE-02 ACDA-12 /108 W
----------129586 090225Z /14
R 081233Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9530
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HA
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 11771

USCINCPAC, USCINCEUR, AND CINCUSNAVEUR FOR POLADS

E. O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PINT , KE
SUBJECT: AFTER KENYATTA WHAT?

REFS: NAIROBI A-54, AUG.4,1978

1. THE FOLLOWING IS AN ABSTRACT OF THE REFERENCE AIRGRAM.

2. TWO FACTIONS ARE PRESENTLY LAYING THE GROUNDWORK TO CONTEST FOR THE PRESIDENCY WHEN KENYATTA DIES. BOTH GROUPS ARE PRE-DOMINANTLY KIKUYU.

3. THE MOST FIRMLY ESTABLISHED GROUP IS LED BY VICE PRESIDENT MOI(OF THE KALENJIN TRIBE), ATTORNEY GENERAL CHARLE NJONJO, AND MINISTER FOR FINANCE AND PLANNING MWAI KIBAKI. MOI, WHO
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WOULD SUCCEED AUTOMATICALLY TO THE PRESIDENCY FOR 90 DAYS UPON KENYATTA'S DEATH, WOULD PROBABLY BE THE PREFERRED CANDIDATE OF THIS GROUP. IF, HOWEVER, IT WERE DETERMINED THAT THE DOMINANT KIKUYU TRIBE WOULD ONLY ACCEPT ANOTHER ONE OF THEIR OWN AS PRESIDENT, KIBAKI WOULD PROBABLY GET THE NOD.

4. THE OTHER FACTION IS COMPOSED PRIMARILY OF MEMBERS OF

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THE KENYATTA EXTENDED FAMILY AND LONG-TIME ASSOCIATES OF THE PRESIDENT. THE "FAMILY" PARTY HAS NOT BEEN AS POLITICALLY ACTIVE DURING THE PAST YEAR AS HAVE THEIR RIVALS, BUT IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT THE FAMILY WOULD GIVE UP THE PRESTIGE AND PERQUISITES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRESIDENCY WITHOUT A STRUGGLE. IT WAS FORMERLY THOUGHT THAT EX-FOREIGN MINISTER NJOROGE MUNGAI WOULD BE THE STANDARD BEARER OF THIS GROUP, BUT HE HAS BEEN QUIESCENT FOR THE PAST YEAR OR TWO, AND A NEW FRONTRUNNER MAY EMERGE FROM THIS FACTION.

5. SINCE BOTH GROUPS BELONG TO THE KENYA AFRICAN NATIONAL UNION(KANU), THE COUNTRY'S ONLY POLITICAL PARTY AT PRESENT, THE CONTEST WILL PROBABLY BE SETTLED WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE PARTY, RATHER THAN AT A GENERAL ELECTION.

6. THERE IS AN OUTSIDE CHANCE THAT EITHER OF THESE GROUPS, OR PERHAPS SOME AS YET UNIDENTIFIED COALITION, MIGHT ATTEPT AN EXTRA-CONSTITUTIONAL ACCESS TO POWER, THOUGH WE THINK THE ODDS ARE AGAINST IT. THE ETHNICALLY FRAGMENTED ARMY WOULD NOT, WE BELIEVE, LEND ITSELF TO SUCH AN ATTEMPT, ALTHOUGH THE ALMOS SOLIDLY KIKUYU GENERAL SERVCES UNIT(GSU) MIGHT BE USED IF IT APPEARED THAT KIKUYU TRIBAL INTERESTS WERE BEING SERIOUSLY THREATENED.

7. ALTHOUGH THE MOI GROUP SEEMS TO HAVE THE EDGE AT THE MOMENT, THE BALANCE COULD BE RADICALLY ALTERED SHOULD
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KENYATTA DECIDE TO DROP MOI FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT POST. IN KENYA, THE VICE PRESIDENT IS APPOINTED FROM THE ELECTED MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, RATHER THAN ELECTED, AND KENYATTA COULD CHANGE THE ENCUMBENT AT ANY TIME.

8. SINCE BOTH CONTENDING GROUPS ARE STRONGLY ANTI-COMMUNIST, ESPOUSE(IF NOT TOTALLY PRACTICE) DEMOCRATIC IDEALS, AND SUPPORT A REGULATED FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM, IT WILL MAKE NO IMMEDIATE DIFFERENCE TO UNITED STATES' INTERESTS WHICH SIDE WINS.
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